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Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-fourth session

Draft report

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Addendum

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017
(*Item 3 (b)*)

Programme 22
Palestine refugees

1. At its 12th meeting, on 9 June 2014, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 22, Palestine refugees, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017 (A/69/6 (Prog. 22)).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the programme and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. Appreciation was expressed for the important work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in alleviating the plight of the Palestine refugees and for the Agency's staff, which carries out its work of high priority under difficult financial, political and economic conditions. It was noted that although it was small, the programme was very important.

4. Tribute was paid to the staff members of the Agency who had lost their lives in their line of duty while carrying out the important work of UNRWA. Concern was expressed for the plight of the Palestine refugees. It was pointed out that the Palestinian issue should be settled and optimistic views were expressed that the situation of the Palestine refugees would be alleviated and eventually settled.

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5. The importance of the Agency's medium-term strategy for the period 2016-2021 was highlighted and the view was expressed that the focus on education and health care should be maintained.

6. Concern was expressed over the increasing number of refugees and over the Agency's financial situation and its continued reliance on extrabudgetary resources.

7. Clarification was sought on the gender dimension of the Agency's work in the refugee camps and on the issue of the level of remuneration to the Agency's personnel, given that the Agency operated in several locations and remuneration packages for employees engaged by other employers varied from place to place.

8. Under subprogramme 1, A long and healthy life, clarification was sought on whether indicator of achievement (a) was a good indicator of the health status of Palestine refugees, since they could have psychological problems apart from physical ones.

9. Under subprogramme 2, Acquired knowledge and skills, concern was expressed about the educational situation of the children whose schools were closed owing to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and clarification was sought on measures that the Agency was taking for access by those children to schools.

10. Under subprogramme 3, A decent standard of living, clarification was sought on indicator of achievement (b), in particular, with regard to female unemployment.

11. Concern was expressed about a number of changes made in the proposed strategic framework for 2016-2017 compared to the strategic framework for 2014-2015 and questions were raised as to why those changes had been made. Concern was also expressed that important ideas and elements of the framework under various subprogrammes for the period 2014-2015 had been excluded in the proposed strategic framework for 2016-2017, which could have an impact on the implementation of the programme.

12. Support was expressed for the proposed strategic framework and the presentation.

13. While support was expressed for the framework for subprogrammes 1, 2 and 3, and the overall objective of subprogramme 4, Human rights enjoyed to the fullest, a question was raised about better defining expected accomplishment (b) under subprogramme 4.

Conclusions and recommendations

14. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of programme 22, Palestine refugees, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017, subject to the following modifications.**

Overall orientation

Paragraph 22.1

At the end of the paragraph, add "It stands ready to continue to do so during the biennium 2016-2017 in accordance with the triennial mandate that it receives from the Assembly".

Paragraph 22.2

At the end of the paragraph, add:

"In its resolution 3331 B (XXIX), the Assembly decided that, with effect from 1 January 1975, the expenses for salaries of international staff in the service of UNRWA which would otherwise be a charge on voluntary contributions should be financed by the regular budget of the United Nations for the duration of the Agency's mandate".

Paragraph 22.3

At the end of the first sentence, add "consistent with internationally agreed goals and standards".

Paragraph 22.5

Replace the first sentence with "The Agency also provides emergency assistance to more than 1.3 million Palestine refugees in acute distress within its areas of operations, as a result of armed conflict in the occupied Palestinian territory and in neighbouring countries, humanitarian access restrictions and prolonged economic hardship in the occupied Palestinian territory and Lebanon".

Paragraph 22.6

At the end of the first sentence, add "and to further developing its protection, programming, operation and advocacy responses".

Subprogramme 1
A long and healthy life

Indicators of achievement

Replace indicator of achievement (a) with: "(a) Increased access to comprehensive primary health-care services, including medication".

Strategy

Paragraph 22.8

Replace subparagraph (b) with "Maintaining the quality and efficiency of primary health-care services to meet international standards in accordance with guidelines of the World Health Organization and the post-2015 development framework (after its adoption by the General Assembly), with an emphasis on preventing chronic diseases to meet the evolving needs of refugees".

Paragraph 22.8

At the end of subparagraph (e), add "This will be achieved through prevention and maintenance, namely, immunization against vaccine-preventable diseases, disease surveillance, outbreak investigation and tuberculosis control, and the operation and maintenance of water and

sanitation networks, either directly or in collaboration with municipal partners".

Subprogramme 2
Acquired knowledge and skills

Strategy

Paragraph 22.9

Replace subparagraph (d) with "Fostering working relationships with host ministries of education and harnessing the potential of a range of diverse partners to enhance service delivery".

Subprogramme 3
A decent standard of living

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

Add a new expected accomplishment as follows:

"(d) Inclusive financial services and access to credit and savings facilities are increased".

Indicators of achievement

Add two new indicators of achievement as follows:

"(d) (i) Increase in the value of loans disbursed";

"(d) (ii) Increase in the number of loans disbursed".